electronic fish finder for the benefit of fishermen;

(b) if so, what are the salient features of this fish finder and on what principle it works;

(c) what is its cost and whether it is affordable by the fishermen; and

(d) whether they have found it useful and how many of the fish finders have been sold up till now?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The equipment, fish finding echo sounder is used for locating fishes upto a depth of 100 meters. It uses and Liquid Crystal Display (LCD) as a viewing device and operates on a 12 volt battery available in a fishing vessel.

Fish finder works on the principle of ultrasonic echo sounding.

(c) The cost of equipment is estimated to be around Rs. 30,000/-and is considered affordable by fishermen for use on both small and medium size trawlers.

(d) Field trials have been done and fish shoals were located in sea at different depths. Since the equipment has not gone into regular production yet, no field data is available.

MRTS Project in Delhi

*176 SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: DR. BAPU KALDATE:

Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS & EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether financial institutions have refused to finance MRTS projects in Delhi;

(b) the steps proposed to be taken to meet this expenditure; and

(c) by when the project is proposed to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI R. K. DHAWAN): (a) No, Sir. Only a meeting had been held with the financial institutions to discuss different modes of financing the capital costs of the Delhi MRTS Project in view of the heavy requirement of long-term funds and the provisions needed for debt servicing obligation. The observations made by the Financial Institutions at this meeting have been noted.

(b) The different possible modes of financing the project include budgetary support, dedicated levies, loans and bileteral assistance from OECF (Japan) etc.

(c) The first Phase of the Project presently identified for implementation would be completed in about 10 years from the date of commencement of work.

Railway line between Dhanushkodi and Rameswaram

*177. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the distance between Dhanushkodi and Rameswaram;

(b) what will be the approximate cost of the railway line to be constructed between Rameswaram and Dhanushkodi;

(c) whether Government would take up this project in the near future to attract more tourists there; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH KALMADI): (a) Approx. 19 Kms.

(b) The approx. cost of constructing of this MG line will be Rs. 25 crores.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Due to poor traffic prospects.

Scheme for connecting Madras Central with Madras Egmore

*178. DR. D. MASTAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government have formulated any scheme for connecting Madras Central and Madras Egmore for the convenience of South Bound Passengers; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH KALMADI): (a) and (b) Madras Central and Madras Egmore have already been connected by BG via Madras Beach through a new line which has been commissioned on 2.4.95. The total distance between Madras Egmore and Madras Central via this route is 11 km.

Halt of Intercity Express Trains in Andhra Pradesh

*179. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what are the steps proposed to increase halts for Inter-City Express trains plying in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) whether any study has been done of the needs of passengers in this regard; and

(c) in what manner Railways propose to get the maximum benefit for the large number of passengers in Andhra Pradesh by increasing halts in Inter-City Express trains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH KALMADI): (a) There are no plans to increase the number of stoppages of Intercity trains in Andhra Pradesh.

(b) Individual demands are examined.

(c) Stoppages are being given as per traffic needs.

Completion of gauge conversion of projects

*180. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the projects for conversion from Metre Gauge to Broad Guage in the country which have been approved but are lying pending due to non-availability of funds;

((b) by when these projects are likely to be taken up and completed;

(c) whether any World Bank assistance has been sought for these projects; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH KALMADI): (a) The following projects which have been approved for conversion are pending due to constraint of funds:

(1) Kashipur-Lalkuan
(2) Bhildi-Luni
(3) Mehsana-Patan with extension to Bhildi.

(b) These projects are temporarily frozen due to constraint of resources and low operational priority. They would be taken up after some of the ongoing projects get completed and the resource position improves. The programme of completion of these projects would be decided once the work on these projects is resumed.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

1023. [WITHDRAWN].

Service Programmes of Indian Red Cross Society

1024. DR. B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) neither runs nor supports any regular service programme for the welfare of civilian